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Review of the first global cooperation framework (1997-2000)

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
	Introduction	1–3	2
I.	The global cooperation framework	4–6	2
	A. Areas of concentration	7–29	2
	B. Selected key issues	30–38	8
II.	Management	39–44	9
III.	Conclusions and next steps	45–53	11
Annex			
	Financial summary		13

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Introduction

1. Globalization accelerated in the 1990's, bringing unequal benefits to communities and countries throughout the world. The roles of state actors, the private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs), development organizations and multilaterism in general were redefined. There was a growing consensus on the international development agenda set at the global conferences — yet ever-declining Official Development Assistance (ODA). Development partners tackled these challenges in increasingly focused, coherent and efficient ways, with action at the country, regional and global levels.

2. UNDP responded to these challenges though its first global cooperation framework (GCF), which the Executive Board approved for the period 1997 to 2000. Despite the continuous decline in core resources — the $117 million initially assigned to the global programme for the four years was reduced to $96 million — nearly 30 programmes and projects have been implemented. Reports have been submitted annually to the Board on the progress made in implementing the GCF (DP/1998/17/Add.2 and DP/1999/CRP.7).

3. In 1999, independent consultants using common terms of reference approved by the Evaluation Office were commissioned to undertake in-depth evaluations of components of the programme with a budget of over $1 million. These evaluations were then consolidated into a report by an independent evaluator. The present report contains a summary of the key recommendations of the evaluation reports; supplementary information on achievements and gaps in the global programme is also provided. In chapter III, there is an outline of how UNDP will build on the strengths and address the shortcomings of the GCF in the next phase of the global programme. The audit of global, interregional and regional projects (May 2000) has also been taken into consideration, particularly in addressing management issues.

I. The global cooperation framework

4. The GCF had three main objectives:

(a) Develop further the portfolio of UNDP interventions, responding to global mandates, in particular those emanating from United Nations conferences, for adaptation by regional and country programmes and projects in their support of the commitments made by programme countries;

(b) Provide the technical guidance needed — partly through partnerships — to respond to the demands emanating from regional and country programmes and projects in their support of the commitments made by programme countries;

(c) Identify gaps and emerging issues that must be addressed to attain sustainable human development and work to incorporate them into the global agenda.

5. These objectives were addressed through five areas of concentration — poverty eradication, gender, environmental sustainability, governance, and emerging and cross-cutting issues. The GCF also stressed the effectiveness of holistic and convergent approaches, linkages between the areas of concentration, capacity-building in programme countries, adding value to UNDP activities, selective interventions and building partnerships and strategic alliances. Details of the global programme, reports previously submitted by the Executive Board and evaluation reports can be accessed on the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) website (http://www.undp.org/bdp).

6. The independent evaluator concluded that, overall, the global programme, with its integrated, multisectoral, and cross-thematic approach is increasingly relevant to maintaining the capacity of UNDP to understand and respond to the world's interdependent development problems and opportunities. In terms of performance, however, the results are mixed.

7. The following sections contain brief examinations of the progress made in each area of concentration and present key issues, problems and constraints.

A. Areas of concentration

1. Poverty eradication

8. Poverty eradication was identified as the priority UNDP goal in 1995, and much of the work in this global programme component has been carried out in support of, or has been closely linked to, corporate advocacy, policy, partnership, and United Nations-wide activities. Programmes and activities include the Poverty Strategies Initiative (PSI), the Sustainable Livelihoods Programme, the Promotion of Civil Society and Participatory Development Programme,

the Knowledge Network for Poverty Reduction Programme, the regular publication of the *Poverty Report*, the Health and Development Programme, the HIV/AIDS and Development Programme, and the establishment of the International Vaccine Institute. Within these programmes and activities, the focus has been on strategic issues and in stimulating new approaches and methodologies which have a particular value to all or most development partners.

9. The Poverty Strategies Initiative, which was launched in 1996 to support the implementation of the commitments on poverty at the country level made at the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD), has provided assistance to over 100 countries for the preparation of poverty surveys and assessments, and the formulation of national strategies and programmes against poverty. In a number of highly indebted poor countries (HIPCs), this work is now being used as a basis for preparing their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). According to a comprehensive external evaluation of the programme recently concluded, the PSI has been successful in the majority of countries. It has generated relevant knowledge and transferred analytical skills that have been used either by the government in formulating its poverty-reduction programmes or by members of civil society in pursuing their advocacy roles. It has also raised awareness of the existence and the nature of poverty and has created a sense of urgency about the need for national responses, stimulating policy discussions in many countries where poverty was not even on the political agenda. The evaluators noted the complex procedures in the approval and payment of funds from New York, the small amounts involved per country, and the broad range of activities funded by the programme as well as inadequate strategic linkages with other key partners in some countries. These issues are being addressed in the successor to this programme, Strategies to Overcome Poverty (STOP).

10. The Sustainable Livelihoods Programme has introduced new methodologies to poverty-reduction activities and pilot demonstrations have been undertaken in several countries — Egypt, Ecuador, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Thailand. The programme has worked with bilateral organizations (e.g., the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)) and civil society groups (The Rockefeller Foundation, OXFAM, the Committee for American Relief Everywhere (CARE)). The independent evaluators concluded that the sustainable livelihoods Programme, which is participatory and assets-based in nature, fostering micro-macro linkages, should not be seen as a separate programme but as an approach to poverty eradication in an SHD context, and as such should be mainstreamed into ongoing programmes and projects.

11. The Promotion of Civil Society and Participatory Development Programme is developing indicators on the status of CSOs in over 60 countries, in collaboration with CIVICUS, World Alliance for Citizen Participation. It has provided input in developing methodologies for CSO capacity-building and has encouraged extensive consultations with bodies concerned with indigenous peoples. New ground was broken in promoting substantive relations and policy engagement between UNDP and CSOs with the formation of a core UNDP/CSO working group on debt and poverty reduction and the establishment of the UNDP/CSO Advisory Committee to the Administrator. A series of country case studies highlighting the role of civil society and UNDP in eradicating poverty and exclusion were compiled. Civil society perspectives on issues such as international trade have been actively encouraged, especially in relation to World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial meetings and other intergovernmental processes. The evaluators recommended a greater focus on key issues, such as globalization, trade, debt, human rights and peace-building, to be undertaken jointly with CSO partners.

12. The Knowledge Network for Poverty Reduction Programme has developed global advocacy tools, including a framework for budgets that are pro-poor and gender- and environment-sensitive, thereby bringing to light the disguised inequalities in national budgets. The publication based on this work received recognition during both the Beijing+5 and WSSD+5 processes. The evaluators found, however, that there was insufficient awareness in country offices of the tools and approaches being developed and recommended that the programme concentrate on producing tools and methodologies, with the roll-out necessary to disseminate them, and build on ongoing work at the country and regional levels.

13. The *Poverty Report*, with two issues so far published, was conceived as the UNDP progress report on poverty and has been effective as an advocacy tool. In particular, the second report on governance for

poverty reduction has been widely quoted in the media, as well as at recent global conferences. In addition, the process of its preparation, including the in-depth case studies in over 20 countries, has led to extensive interactions between BDP and UNDP country offices, resulting in identifying gaps in UNDP work in poverty; it thus has the potential to enhance the quality of country-level work.

14. An important component of this cluster has addressed health issues from a development and poverty perspective. The HIV/AIDS and Development Programme has focused on incorporating HIV/AIDS as primarily a development issue, at the global, national and local levels and has had some impact on raising awareness in this regard. It has been a catalyst for research to identify the social and economic causes and consequences of HIV/AIDS. There have been extensive efforts to engage CSO networks and local government institutions, for example, through the Alliance of Mayors' Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at the Local Level. The Health and Development programme has been a partner in several global and regional health initiatives, especially with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank, in areas such as malaria, tropical diseases and mortality prevention. GCF interventions have also made a contribution to the establishment of the International Vaccine Institute (IVI) in the Republic of Korea, which is now an established intergovernmental institution. The evaluators noted the limited staffing and resource levels of the Health and Development programme and pointed out that its current mandate was defined almost a decade ago and has not kept pace with changes in the external and internal institutional environments, thus raising the issue of the comparative advantage of UNDP in this sector. Commenting specifically on the HIV and Development Programme, evaluators noted that the evolving dynamics of the HIV/AIDS epidemic require some redefinition of the role of UNDP in this area.

2. Gender equality

15. The global programme has focused on reinforcing corporate commitments and has developed tools and methodologies to build the capacities of country offices to deliver results in women's empowerment and gender equality in line with the Beijing Platform for Action. The Gender-in-Development Programme (GIDP) was able to cast a wide net to support gender focal points in country offices and develop a broad-based network of experts in the field through a consultative process that involved 110 countries. It became clear however, that country offices needed dedicated, specialized gender experts to assist them in mainstreaming gender in their work. Through the global programme, GIDP fielded gender advisors in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and 21 United Nations Volunteers (UNV) gender specialists with non-core funds raised from six donor countries. The UNDP Gender Network is fully linked via electronic discussion lists and shares field experience through the electronic bulletin "Gender Beat", the GIDP web site and several publications on emerging challenges such as the gender divide in access to information technology and the roles, perceptions and attitudes of men. The global programme has been instrumental in bringing women advocates for change to influence intergovernmental processes such as Beijing+5 and WSSD+5. There have been extensive interactions within the United Nations inter-agency group on system-wide policies on gender and some in-house initiatives to assess the impact of the UNDP decision to allocate 20 per cent of the target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) funding for gender mainstreaming. The tangible results produced by the global programme provide a good argument for stronger, more coherent efforts to mainstream gender in UNDP work. However, and as underlined by the evaluators, there is still need for clear plans to monitor outcomes, make relevant linkages and disseminate findings, and to give consideration to further consolidation and refocusing. Further, the financial contribution made to the regional bureaux through the programme to stimulate global/regional synergies has not shown the desired results because the purposes for which the funds could be put were not initially specified and there were no provisions for monitoring and reporting — although it should be noted that the networking among gender units and focal points has been among the most productive and cohesive of all networks. Given that the 1999 results-oriented report (ROAR) identified inadequate gender-mainstreaming as a weakness in UNDP programmes in general, the global programme will focus on developing and strengthening methodologies, tools and support for gender-mainstreaming. In this context, it should be remembered that a significant achievement of the global programme has been the extent to which gender issues have been integrated into its own programme

components, including those for governance, environment and poverty as, for example in the establishment of gender-sensitive budgets (see para. 12).

3. Environmental sustainability

16. Programme activities have been in five distinct areas — energy, food security, forests, water and integrated approaches to environmental programming. The work involved has had a strong poverty focus and the issues taken up within these areas have important implications for poverty reduction.

17. In the area of energy, activities have been concerned with policy development and institution-building on sustainable energy and climate change. Notable achievements have been in formulating a comprehensive corporate policy on energy, in identifying and disseminating lessons learned relating to the Clean Development Mechanism, bio-mass energy, women and energy, and governance dimensions of energy, and in contributing to global policy-making through a series of publications, such as *Energy after Rio, Sustainable Energy in Developing Countries* and the *World Energy Assessment* (forthcoming). Extensive support has been provided to programme countries.

18. In agriculture and food security, guidelines have been developed and training provided to country offices to improve UNDP corporate practices. Working with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the programme enabled the establishment of an impact, assessment and evaluation capacity within CGIAR to monitor international agricultural research centres. Working with a regional association of national and cultural research centres, South-South cooperation, especially in East, West and Central Africa has been enhanced. Inputs have been provided to strengthen national information systems on vulnerable groups, through the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems Programme. The Forest Programme (PROFOR) has assisted several countries to build their sustainable forest management capacities and five countries were targeted for pilot activities — Cameroon, Costa Rica, Guyana, Malawi and Viet Nam. There is clear evidence that policies and practices of forest management and institutional capacities in these countries have been improved as a result. PROFOR also worked closely with the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests organizing widely recognized studies and workshops on financing sustainable forest management.

19. The global programme on water has focused on capacity-building for the sustainable management of fresh water resources and of aquatic ecosystems. It has been associated with the World Bank and other bilateral donors in the Global Water Partnership (GWP), which promotes information-sharing, policy dialogue and capacity-building through nine projects, including the GWP Water Forum, water and sanitation activities, technology research in irrigation and drainage and the International Network for Water Sector Capacity. The programme has also played a lead role in transboundary river issues — the Nile River Basin Cooperative Framework and the Transboundary River Basin Initiative. The programme on water is addressing a range of issues that will be increasingly critical to international development and peace and security in many parts of the world.

20. Several activities have been undertaken to stimulate integrated approaches to environmental programmes. The programme helped to develop and supported the special millennium edition of the *World Resources Report*, co-sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank and the World Resources Institute. It has facilitated the development of the Poverty and Environment Initiative, which identified practical recommendations to harmonize poverty-reduction and environmental-regeneration policies and practices. The programme has been a key factor in refining and upgrading UNDP corporate approaches to environmental management. Nonetheless, the evaluation found that the programme has not managed to overcome the inherent difficulties of the UNDP system in integrating country, regional and global levels and that it should move towards a cross-sectoral philosophy that starts with the needs of programme countries for assistance in environmental planning, incorporates developments in the global dialogue policy and sets up a flow of findings between countries, regions and the global level.

4. Governance

21. The demands on this component of the global programme have grown exponentially, both from within the organization and from external partners, as the issue of governance increasingly emerged as a core UNDP theme. Projects are grouped in four critical sub-areas: (a) governing institutions (parliamentary,

electoral and judicial reform and human rights); (b) decentralized governance (decentralization, participatory local governance and urban governance); (c) public-sector management (civil service reform, accountability, transparency, anti-corruption, globalization and trade, debt relief, aid coordination); and (d) cross-cutting (crisis countries, gender and governance, capacity development and electronic networking). The programme has contributed to making these issues better known and more widely addressed within the international development system, and in the evolution of corporate policy internally. A significant number of programme countries, including Benin, Cambodia, Indonesia, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, and most recently, Nigeria and East Timor, have been assisted by the programme in developing their own country-based activities.

22. In governing institutions, a parliamentary-strengthening programme was launched with a $6 million contribution from the Government of Belgium to provide support to parliaments in a number of countries. A Latin America regional programme for judicial reform was enlarged into a global programme, with some key outputs, including a network of 350 CSOs. A global conference was held in Mexico with electoral bodies from around the world. In human rights, an official policy paper was produced and a training module was tested in several regions. In addition, a new global programme on human rights strengthening (HURIST) was launched with support provided to several countries. According to the evaluator, one of the strongest GCF achievements is in the area of integrating human rights and sustainable human development. HURIST, jointly implemented with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, links human rights issues to human development, within a broad governance and development perspective, providing a model of how a complex, sensitive problem can be addressed at the national level, through practical field demonstrations linked to policy and methodology development, and its demand-driven support services to the field.

23. The global programme on decentralized governance included a research component, with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and nine national research institutions analysing and synthesizing successful case studies on the role of participation and partnership in service delivery to the poor. The Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE) provided support to the urban poor in 60 cities and carried out a global evaluation of lessons learned. The Urban Management Programme (UMP) conducted city consultations on urban poverty, urban governance and urban environment in cities in four regions.

24. In the area of public-sector management, the global programme on governance prepared an official policy paper on anti-corruption and supported the ninth International Anti-Corruption Conference (Durban, October 1999). The Programme for Accountability and Transparency (PACT) has contributed to shaping and guiding UNDP policy in the area of anti-corruption, and to building capacities in a number of programme countries. A major programme with the United Nations Conference on Trade an Development (UNCTAD) was launched on globalization and trade and provided support to least developed countries (LDCs) in global trade negotiations. Under this joint programme, a workshop was held in South Africa for LDC trade negotiators in preparation for the WTO conference held in Seattle, resulting in the first LDC paper on multilateral trade negotiations; five national workshops in Central America brought together a wide range of national stakeholders to discuss their strategies for integration into the global economy while ensuring justice and equity. These activities are spinning off further country-level action. The first UNDP technical paper on debt relief and SHD was prepared and distributed and a series of case studies for civil service reform was produced. In order to support aid-coordination mechanisms, UNDP undertook an evaluation of the round-table mechanism while the World Bank evaluated its Consultative Group process. This led to a meeting in November 1999 of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC), the World Bank and UNDP. The meeting recommended improvements to current processes in ways that strengthen national ownership and broad-based participation.

25. Through the cross-cutting programmes on governance, the first UNDP analysis of its experience in crisis countries was prepared. The focus was on gender and governance issues at a meeting in New Delhi, which brought together parliamentarians, policy makers and CSOs. A number of capacity-development tools were prepared, including a new methodology

based on entry points at the system, organizational or individual level. MAGNET, the UNDP web site on governance, and a product of the global programme, contains a wealth of knowledge and is one of the largest and most successful UNDP web sites (magnet.undp.org).

26. The programme has been involved in organizing or supporting several global conferences on various governance themes, including the World Conference on Governance (Manila, May 1999), which have all contributed to raising awareness and understanding and have helped to exchange experiences. Extensive support at the country and regional levels has included assistance in the design of large technical cooperation programmes in the area of governance reform in countries such as Bangladesh and Nigeria and for the Arab regional programme. The evaluators, while commending the overall performance, also took note of its variability, and reiterated that it has been strongly affected by the change in the strategic directions of the organization as a whole and the implications of this for the allocation of resources, both human and financial. There has been a consequent lag between the build-up of high workload pressure points at Headquarters and the allocation of commensurate additional staff and other resources to those pressure points.

5. Emerging and cross-cutting issues

27. The global programme has many emerging and cross-cutting issues. In addition to those mentioned above, three activities are especially worthy of note. While the Human Development Report Office is an independent entity within UNDP, the production of the *Human Development Report* (HDR) has been funded by the GCF during the current programming period. The evaluator notes that the HDR has undoubtedly played a significant role in advancing the human development perspective in the analysis of issues of global significance. The human development index is now widely accepted and is used increasingly as the evaluator also notes, as a more genuine measure of socio-economic progress, as envisioned in the first report, the *Human Development Report, 1990*. The HDR findings and policy prescriptions have influenced global and national policy-making. At the country level, the national HDRs and the subregional HDRs (South Asia, SADC region) are emerging as important tools of policy analysis, advocacy and dialogue, and as key inputs into policy-making. The studies and publications of the Office of Development Studies (ODS), most notably the book, *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century*, have generated new perspectives for the rational conduct of international development cooperation in the era of globalization. As noted by the evaluator, the ideas expressed in the book are now espoused by such international agencies as the World Bank and WHO to the extent that ODS may make their practical impact felt more through the work of such agencies than through its own day-to-day work on individual projects and countries. Several activities have also been undertaken on financing of development in the aftermath of this publication.

28. In the area of information technology, the IT for Development Programme has combined information-gathering and awareness-raising activities with pilot projects, with limited financial and human resources, performing an active dissemination strategy, including through its web site "Info21" (http://www.undp.org/info21). Its pilot initiatives, for instance, the three technology access community centres provided a central hub for community connectivity, training in information technology, especially of women and youth, and content development in Arabic. This experience induced the Government of Egypt to replicate the model nationwide. Other countries in the region are also contemplating adopting this model. The Sustainable Development Network Programme (SDNP), established in 1993, with the purpose of promoting, step by step, Internet connectivity and networking, capacity-building and content (geared to SHD), now operates in 41 countries. SDNP has established a basis for knowledge-based approaches to development and other societal applications. In some countries, it has contributed to the creation of systems that facilitate decentralized, participatory and transparent forms of governance. Some 20,000 people/organizations have been trained, 2,500 partner/web sites launched or hosted and 3,500 thematic Internet lists (networks) launched; 25 SDNPs are now entirely self-financing, through user/web site hosting fees, and, on average, SDNPs generate cost-recovery revenues of $72,000 a year.

29. The evaluator of the IT for Development Programme recommends greater streamlining, coordination and cross-fertilization of the disparate information technologies initiatives of UNDP at the

country, regional and global levels, and for the global programme, a stronger focus on policy formulation.

B. Selected key issues

1. Advocacy

30. The evaluator notes that the GCF continues to find and expand multiple avenues to influence the worldwide dialogue on important development issues. This work includes not only high profile reports and conferences, but also continued progress in the identification of indicators to benchmark and measure progress towards sustainable human development. There are still some publications produced and not actively disseminated, and workshops organized and then dropped. However, the evaluations of the GCF subprogrammes indicate that UNDP has learned much about how to secure the maximum impact from its policy products and how to follow up on the progress and commitments stemming from the major United Nations global conferences of the 1990s.

2. Country linkages

31. As noted earlier, an important objective of the GCF is to provide support and guidance to country-level activities. While linkages with country programmes are strong in some components, they are more limited in others. The outcome of the UNDP 2001 change management process, which restricted the role of BDP vis-à-vis country offices with regard to the piloting of new initiatives and the dissemination of packaged lessons learned, made it more difficult for some of the global programme components to identify and establish useful, demand-led linkages with country offices and country programmes and to provide needed policy support. Thus, improvements are needed in the design and implementation of future global programmes to ensure that there are optimal levels of country linkages, taking note of the different needs of different countries. This issue is central to the Administrator's Business Plans and to the restructuring of the policy function in UNDP and is driving the redesign of the second GCF.

32. Across all areas, however, the global programme has been active in launching knowledge networks, connecting country office and headquarters colleagues, and in some cases, external partners, electronically. As noted by the evaluator, the establishment of six knowledge networks such as the Human Development Report Network, the Poverty Reduction Network, the Governance Network (MAGNET), and the Gender Network, are providing new means of support and sources of information for beleaguered technical field staff. The subregional resource facilities (SURFs), piloted, expanded, and managed by BDP and the regional bureaux, led the way in engaging technical field staff in virtual teams. These networks provide the means and incentive for field staff to assist each other with expertise and information. They go beyond the concern with enhancing vertical and horizontal linkages to creating multidirectional webs and matrices of experience and exchange. These global hub networks and the specific subregional networks operated by the SURFs now have large numbers of active participants.

3. Global/regional linkages

33. While the connections with regional and country programmes were a central element in global programmes, none of the component evaluations indicated strong evidence of effective linkages leading to concrete results although some cooperative activities were noted positively (e.g., the African Governance Forum). The lack of linkages can be explained partly by the non-synchronization of programming cycles at the global and regional levels and partly by the structural organization of UNDP, which clearly separates the management of global and regional programmes. Hence the need for increased matrix management. The ROAR confirms the need to review linkages between global, regional, and country office programming, stating that country office ROARs often omitted to report progress realized through global or regional initiatives, suggesting that improved results may well require closer integration of global, regional and country-level programming. Clear corporate guidelines on the roles and linkages of global and regional programmes are therefore needed: neither the Programming Manual nor the last comprehensive evaluation ("Global, Interregional and Regional Programmes: An Evaluation of Impact, 1996") covers the distinction sufficiently.

4. Partnerships

34. Implementing the GCF has resulted in the establishment of a wide range of partnerships with other United Nations intergovernmental and

non-governmental bodies and with bilateral donors. Most programmes have initiated partnership arrangements to mobilize technical resources in implementing their portfolios of diverse activities. There are partnerships with the World Bank in many areas — food security, water and sanitation. With the World Institute for Development, Economics, and Research (WIDER), there is collaboration on poverty statistics. Governance programmes have actively collaborated with institutions such as the American Bar Association, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Transparency International, and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. The Civil Society Organization and Public Participation Programme (CSOPP) has been an important partner in developing relevant agendas for relationships with CSOs. These are only illustrative of the partnerships that have been established. The partnerships must be deepened and expanded to optimize their potential for developing efficient forms of technical cooperation and support arrangements to country offices.

5. Resource mobilization

35. Although it expected non-core resources to be mobilized, the GCF refrained from setting targets. The overall achievement so far in mobilizing non-core resources can be considered as significant but uneven across sectors. Governance programmes have generated nearly twice their core budget in non-core resources ($38 million) from eight bilateral donors and the World Bank. In the area of energy and the environment, cost-sharing and parallel funding (including the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Capacity 21) have amounted to $130 million, which is about six times its core budget. The Poverty Strategy Initiative, associated with GCF poverty programmes, has generated approximately $13 million. The absence of readily identifiable products appealing to donors and the development of programmes addressing poverty issues but not meeting priorities established by donors partly explain the limited resource mobilization in the sector of poverty eradication.

36. Indications so far are that the GCF has an important potential for mobilizing considerable amounts of non-core resources, both in the form of cost-sharing and parallel financing, to undertake mutually agreed tasks that are of high priority for capacity- and institution-building in programme countries.

6. Focus and integration

37. Although the GCF represents a major advance over previous global programming patterns, its impact continues to be dispersed through the large number of programmes. Moreover, many programmes have undertaken activities on a wide range of issues, resulting in a lack of concentration in those areas where UNDP has strong comparative advantages, and hindering the capacity to demonstrate and clearly define the organization's added value. UNDP does not have the in-house capacities for so wide-ranging an agenda; high-quality, specialized professional skills are required. This point was noted in the evaluations of almost all the components and constitutes a challenge in the ongoing reorganization of the Bureau for Development Policy. Nevertheless, the ROAR confirms that UNDP is moving upstream and is performing generally well at that level, in line with the Administrator's vision for the new UNDP. At the same time, the ROAR analysis also points to the lack of strong links between UNDP policy work and its direct interventions, even if in some countries the experience gained at the downstream level is fed into the design of policy and institutional frameworks.

38. With notable exceptions such as the mainstreaming of gender, the Poverty and Environment Initiative, the Urban Management Programme, the Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods links, the programme as a whole has not benefited sufficiently from the full potential of interlinking the various programme components and thereby promoting a holistic approach.

II. Management

Overall management arrangements

39. The evaluator notes that with 34 subprogrammes and projects under the GCF, there is a wide variety of managerial effectiveness in all of the aspects discussed in this section. Neither the evaluations upon which the present review is based nor the ROAR narrative and the strategic results framework (SRF) updates provide much sustained assessment of management. The audit, however, addresses some of the managerial shortcomings.

Adequacy and quality of technical support

40. Throughout the 12 evaluations runs the theme of inadequate staffing levels vis-à-vis the mandated tasks of the specific subprogramme; this is despite the overall increase in the numbers of BDP staff during the current programming period. With pressures to broaden outside contacts through partnering and external resource mobilization, be responsive to concerns from the field level, take a cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary approach to the subject at hand, and establish and implement follow-up and dissemination mechanisms for all subprogramme activities, it stands to reason that most subprogrammes suffer from staffing constraints. In spite of these pressures and complaints, the evaluations show that most subprogrammes and projects are providing and producing very credible technical work.

Executing arrangements and effectiveness of project managers

41. Almost all GCF programmes are executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). UNOPS undertakes the administrative and financial aspects of the management of these programmes, leaving the technical and substantive backstopping function to BDP. The evaluator noted that while these arrangements have worked by and large, a number of the small projects are reportedly suffering from basic management problems, owing, it seems, to the pressures on the very limited staff and the inadequacy of systems that support management tasks, such as recruitment, contract and disbursement-monitoring. The audit also observed that in some UNOPS-executed projects, UNDP staff provide substantive input and make key implementation decisions while UNOPS provides limited administrative support. Project managers expect more management assistance from UNOPS than is actually provided for under current contractual arrangements; some of these managers are policy staff, giving less attention to regular monitoring and reporting and financial management. Thus, rationalization in execution arrangements is called for in the next phase of the GCF, which will enable the reduced numbers of BDP headquarters staff to concentrate on substantive functions and at the same time, ensure better management, monitoring, and reporting. Accordingly, discussions are currently under way with UNOPS, including negotiating for dedicated UNOPS staff for the management of global programmes (the Management Development and Governance Division, for example, had such an arrangement).

42. The incompatibility between the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) used by UNDP and the UNOPS financial systems has also been a bottleneck in ensuring the continuous financial monitoring of delivery and commitments.

Effectiveness of oversight and quality control

43. BDP has introduced a number of oversight systems during the GCF period, such as project approval committees (PACs) for all components, semi-annual monitoring reports (superseded by the SRF/ROAR process), and centralized approvals for establishing contracts for activities of limited duration to ensure better management of the staff structure. The audit recommends further measures to strengthen the PAC processes; they will be applied. One rationalization measure has been the consolidation of a large number of Special Programme Resources (SPR) categories and other programmes inherited from earlier programming arrangements into the current GCF. There is, however, a need to integrate the oversight of trust funds into bureau-wide processes. Measures for strengthening oversight and quality control are being developed in the context of the restructuring of BDP.

Monitoring and evaluation

44. The evaluator comments that the process of carrying out the 12 comprehensive evaluations of the GCF subprogrammes was well managed, with established common frameworks to build in a certain degree of comparability across a wide variety of activities, with the involvement of the Evaluation Office. However, neither the overall global programme nor its subprogrammes developed and tracked the sort of objective indicators of success, including that of cost-effectiveness, that would be required in national-level programmes. The introduction of the SRF/ROAR provides a monitoring framework that should serve to sharpen the results focus, strengthen ongoing financial and substantive monitoring by programme managers, and oversight and feedback by management.

III. Conclusions and next steps

45. The independent evaluations have pointed out the need for further focus in the global programme, based on the availability of resources, and for more effective programme linkages with activities at the national and regional levels. Programme focus that will achieve greater impact, better thematic integration and strategic results was also emphasized in view of the dispersed nature of the past global programmes. The evaluators pointed out the need to build on proven areas of programme strength and reiterated the importance of establishing effective mechanisms to learn from successful experiences and disseminate this learning to a wider international audience as well as to countries in a more targeted way, something that UNDP had not done adequately in the past. This applied to the dissemination of information within UNDP as well as to external partners.

46. The findings of the evaluators are shaping the design of the next phase of the global programme. At the same time, the introduction of the ROAR provides clear summary information on UNDP programmatic focus and country-level impact, as well as gaps that point to areas where new approaches, tools and support are needed.

47. The next phase of the global programme is also being developed in the context of the implementation of the Business Plans 2000-2003. In the new UNDP, BDP, which manages the global programme, will focus on applied development policy practice, providing policy support where it is most needed — not at headquarters but in the field. The transformation of BDP thus entails considerable streamlining and rationalization of staff roles to produce a decentralized, networked, hands-on operation that is service-delivery oriented. In 1999, there were 250 headquarters-based staff serving UNDP core development programmes, GEF, the Montreal Protocol, the Office to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNSO) and Capacity 21; by the end of 2001, there should be 120 staff at headquarters and 98 redeployed to the field. The responsibilities of BDP staff will be completely redesigned, knowledge networks strengthened internally and externally, and matrixed, team-based approaches introduced to leverage the small pool of BDP policy specialists in the most cost-effective manner. The small network of BDP policy specialists will also draw heavily on external partners — specialized agencies, development organizations, research institutions, CSOs, and, in particular, centres of excellence in programme countries — to ensure the delivery of needed policy support to countries.

48. The other part of policy work — policy advocacy — is also being considerably strengthened in the Business Plans, through the grouping of the Human Development Office and the Office of Development Studies.

49. In preparation for the new GCF, a series of consultations will be held with key stakeholders. While not pre-empting the consultation process, the evaluations, ROAR and ongoing discussions have led the Administrator to request that priority attention is given to ensuring that the following issues be addressed.

Substantive focus

50. To mobilize effective substantive and financial support through UNDP country offices, the GCF must focus on areas that resonate with and are relevant to the real needs of programme countries. The main tools of UNDP in the fight against poverty are strategic policy advice and capacity-building, supported by effective advocacy and strong partnerships to supplement its own more focused role. The new GCF will, therefore, primarily support activities that allow UNDP country offices to tap into the best global knowledge and expertise on appropriate policies and governance arrangements in the fight against poverty. Provision of policy programme support will be the main focus of the GCF. The GCF will also have a secondary role as a launch-pad for global initiatives on pressing problems such as the growing digital divide, the fight against HIV/AIDS, and sustainable energy, although in these areas, too, the focus will be policy and coordination support rather than downstream project activities. UNDP will seek to prove itself as a reliable and resourceful partner that can provide support in the design of enabling strategies and regulatory frameworks that effectively address the problems.

51. Given this new focus, the new GCF will not include specific support to areas such as health (except HIV/AIDS), education, nutrition, forestry, food-security issues, except in the context of overall poverty policy frameworks, plans and budgetary analyses; rather, UNDP will rely on and work with the greater

competence that specialized agencies and other centres of expertise possess in these areas to provide support to countries that need it.

Resource mobilization

52. The provision of adequate core resources is a prerequisite for UNDP to build a critical mass of expertise in each focus area. However, this must be supported by a strategic, non-core strategy founded on key results-oriented programmes for poverty, governance, the digital divide, HIV/AIDS and environment and sustainable energy. The GCF will therefore be accompanied by a clear resource mobilization strategy that will ensure that resources mobilized contribute to maintaining the policy focus of the organization.

Personnel and management focus

53. Even if the current resource constraints are overcome, the number of activities under the key focus areas will be drastically reduced. Staff and financial resources will instead be concentrated on continuing activities in key success areas. This organizational focus will in turn be sustained in the focus of the SURFs and those of policy specialists to be placed in the field.

Annex

Financial summary

Global interregional and special activities
GCF period: 1997-2000
Reporting year: 2000
Core resources

Table 1
Summary of allocation and expenditure[a]

	Allocation			*Expenditure*		
Programme areas	*SPR carry-over[b]*	*Line 1.3[c]*	*Total resources*	*SPR*	*Line 1.3*	*Total expenditure[d,e]*
Emerging and cross-cutting issues	1 417	8 523	9 940	628	8 854	9 482
Poverty elimination and sustainable livelihood	8 215	25 856	34 071	6 247	18 203	24 450
Environment, natural resources and management	2 015	21 887	23 902	1 690	17 821	19 511
Advancement of women and gender equity	1 684	7 539	9 223	213	4 554	4 767
Management development and governance	18 768	19 837	38 605	13 280	18 852	32 132
Office for Development Studies		3 368	3 368		3 232	3 232
Contingencies managed by the Office of the Administrator	10 240	6 164	16 404	7 088	5 215	12 303
Human Development Report Office	268	11 646	11 914	111	11 008	11 119
5th cycle DGIP activities		12 783	12 783	3 091	8 518	11 609
Total	**42 607**	**117 603**	**160 210**	**32 348**	**96 257**	**128 605**

[a] The above table reflects actual allocation and expenditure figures for 1997-1999 and estimated figures for 2000.

[b] Balance of SPR resources carried forward from the 5th cycle (column 1).

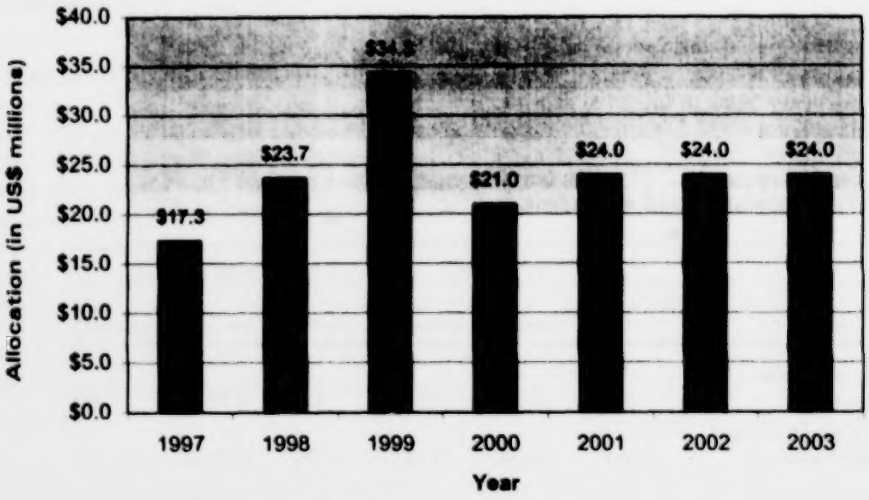
[c] In accordance with Executive Board decision 95/23, an allocation of $129.1 million was allocated to global, interregional and special activities (line 1.3). Of this amount, in 1996, $11.5 million was used to finance the ongoing activities of the 5th cycle global and interregional activities, leaving a balance of $117.6 million (column 2).

[d] As a result of declining resources, the following actions were taken: (a) a significant portion of the former SPR activities were consolidated and/or closed; and (b) some of the activities that were outlined in the first global cooperation framework were sharply reduced (column 6).

[e] As a result of the action taken under footnote d, $31.2 million ($160.1 million-$128.6 million) were set aside to finance key activities in the second global cooperation framework, 2001-2003 (column 6).

Abbreviations: DGIP = Division for Global and Interregional Programmes;
SPR = special programme resources.

Table II
Annualized allocations



Note: As indicated in footnote d in table I, approximately $31.2 million will be carried over from the first global cooperation framework, which will be used to finance activities for 2001-2003.

Table III
Cost-sharing and trust funds

Non-core 1997-1999

Programme areas	*Resource balance as of 1 January 1997*[a]	*Non-core income, 1997-1999*	*Non-core expenditure, 1997-1999*
	(Thousands of United States dollars)		
Emerging and cross-cutting issues	1 208	751	416
Poverty elimination and sustainable livelihood	7 124	8 017	7 069
Environment, natural resources and management	34	16 020	9 662
Advancement of women and gender equity	0	1 016	652
Management development and governance	4 849	18 325	15 825
Office for Development Studies	(110)	88	(27)
Contingencies managed by the Office of the Administrator	122	479	222
Human Development Report Office	0	565	431
Former DGIP projects	6 523	6 990	9 492
Total	**19 750**	**52 251**	**43 742**

[a] This amount reflects the balances of non-core resources mobilized by the former BPPS and DGIP.

Abbreviations: BPPS = Bureau for Programme and Policy Support;
DGIP = Division for Global and Interregional Programmes;
SPR = special programme resources.